

Playworkers' responsibilities with regard to common forms of abuse



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

1. UK Cache Playworker Topics Playworkers' Responsibilities with Regard to Common Forms of Abuse: All who have contact with children and families have a duty to

'safeguard and promote the welfare of children.' Department of Health COS(C)CNI (2005)

To fulfill this duty, playworkers need the correct knowledge, skills and attitudes. The knowledge areas include full awareness of what to look for in an abused child, both physically and behaviourally. For example, sexual abuse may have few physical signs, but a child may display inappropriate sexual behaviour or knowledge, for its age, draw explicit pictures of a sexual nature, have eating problems, depression or try to run away from home. With bullying, racial or emotional abuse, the playworker should recognise signs such as excessive sadness, the inability to play and severe behavioural problems. Signs of neglect are usually not difficult to observe.

A further responsibility is to know the referral processes in place locally, in order to act when abuse is suspected. They should be able to make full and correct records of everything and also know the laws which demand the required action (e. g. Children Act 1989)

Finally, their greatest responsibility is to the child first, so the attitudes of caring kindness, empathy, and support must be present. They need to listen, question appropriately (for age), offer help and support. Thus a knowledge of support systems and services is necessary.

Define, Outline and analyse two common strategies to protect children from abuse: The process involved, when abuse is suspected and concerns raised, broadly runs as follows:

Identification, Consultation, Referral, Initial Assessment, Planning, Strategy
<https://assignbuster.com/playworkers-responsibilities-with-regard-to-common-forms-of-abuse/>

Planning Meetings, and after all these, either of two strategies may be put in place: 1. Services offered to child and family to ensure its future welfare is secured, or 2. Child's name is placed on the Child Protection Register and further assessments, meetings and reviews of progress will continue.

Flowcharts 1 5

(Department of Health, COS(C)CNI..) The choice depends on the danger to a child's welfare.

The playworker will have input, as someone who knows the child and its circumstances. If they have raised the concerns, they should make clear and correct records, consult with managers and colleagues, and those in other child protection roles, usually beginning with Social Services. A referral to Social Services is appropriate for a child deemed to be at risk of significant harm. In some cases, where crime is suspected, the Police might be the first point of referral. Where any doubts exist, referrals are appropriate in order to protect a child.

The concerns should be discussed, tactfully and sympathetically with the child, in a manner appropriate to age, and involvement with the family should be sought, unless doing so would endanger the child further. If a referral is then made by telephone, it should be confirmed in writing within 48 hours. Social Services, as the main agency, will take action within one working day. This includes the initial assessment, and if necessary, where crime is suspected, involve the Police. The plan then is for the Police and Social Services to agree a plan of action. Sometimes, this even includes removing the child into temporary care, a traumatic and disruptive step to take, but the child's safety is of paramount importance. If possible, support and other services may be a better option and will be offered to the child and

<https://assignbuster.com/playworkers-responsibilities-with-regard-to-common-forms-of-abuse/>

family. The Social Worker who has charge of the case will make decisions, but these will be assisted by the input of others involved with that child. This is where a playworker has to ensure clear and correct records have been made, all dates and times included, all conversations, behaviours, evidence of abuse and actions taken are written down and passed on. They may also be required to attend assessments and meetings. The point is made that playworkers, teachers, G. P. s, carers etc. must never attempt to investigate themselves, they must follow the correct procedure within the laws which govern it.

2.

Define, outline and analyse three pieces of UK legislation which underpin the role of playworker in relation to health and safety of children: The first and most important piece of legislation must be the Children Act 1989, for child protection. In particular, Sections 17 and 47 impact on the playworker.

Section 17 covers a 'child in need' where there may be neglect and family problems. After initial assessment, followed by core assessment, a Child and Family Support Plan may be drawn up and followed by further intervention, planning and review until all is going well. Section 47, where the child is in need of protection, again a plan will be drawn up, registration on the Child Protection Register and further reviews, planning and intervention until the child is safe and its welfare assured. Local authorities have a duty, under Section 17 to...

1. 'safeguard and promote the welfare of children within their area who are in need.

2. and so far is consistent with the duty, to promote the upbringing of such children by their families, by providing a range of services appropriate to <https://assignbuster.com/playworkers-responsibilities-with-regard-to-common-forms-of-abuse/>

those children's needs.'

Local authorities, under Section 47 have a duty to investigate where they:

a) Are informed that a child who lives, or is found in their area

I. Is the subject of an emergency protection order; or

II. Is in police protection;

or

b) Have reasonable cause to suspect that a child who lives, or is found, in their area is

suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm.

Playworkers must also be aware of and follow the rules of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. Sections 3 and 4 contain the major legislation covering playgrounds and play areas, where a duty of care exists to ensure the safety of users. Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 require that risk assessments of all facilities are carried out, that there are safety policies in place and that all staff are adequately trained in the areas of safety. The Health and Safety Executive provides guidance and information, as does the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents.

The Human Rights Act 1998, which while it recognises 'the right to respect for private and family life' Department of Health COS(C)CNI (2005) and Article 8. 2 of the European Convention for Human Rights asserts that public interference should not take place, still allows for confidential information to be shared. Basically, it recognises that disclosure of information could result in harm to the private and family life when concerns of abuse and child safety are raised and shared. However, even under that article, where possible crime against a child has taken place, or children's welfare is in danger, it can be used to protect them. It is understandable that playworkers

<https://assignbuster.com/playworkers-responsibilities-with-regard-to-common-forms-of-abuse/>

and other professionals do not want to break the law, that they recognise the upheaval and pain disclosures and investigations can bring, and that they do need to work within the law. But ultimately, the protection of children is the important issue. There is also the Data Protection Act 1998 to be considered, but again, where the welfare of a child is at stake, and disclosure of confidential information is necessary, then there are good and legitimate reasons for sharing the information with professionals in the field of child protection.

Other Acts which playworkers should familiarise themselves with include, the Race Relations Act 1976 (Amendment Regulations) 2003, and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (c. 50). Such a width of knowledge, or at least awareness can only contribute to the playworker's ability to help protect the child both mentally and physically, as well as increasing their professional knowledge.

Reference List and Bibliography

Department of Health COS(C)CNI What to Do If You're Worried A Child is Being Abused (Summary). Crown Copyright 2005. HMSO London. Internet, available from:

www.doh.gov.uk/safeguardingchildren/index.htm [cited 21 March 2006]

Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (c. 50). HMSO London. Internet, available from:

www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts1995/1995050.htm [cited 21 March 2006]

Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999. HMSO London. Internet, available from www.hse.gov.uk [cited 21 March 2006]

Race Relations Act 1976 (Amendment) Regulations 2003. HMSO London. <https://assignbuster.com/playworkers-responsibilities-with-regard-to-common-forms-of-abuse/>

Internet, available from

www.opsi.gov.uk/si/si2003/2031626.htm. [cited 21 March 2006]